

The Monthly Musical Record.

JANUARY 1, 1877.

THE YEAR 1876.

THE last year, which has already come to be spoken of as "the Bayreuth" year, and, like the Olympiads of old, as the "first Bayreuthiad," will doubtless long be regarded as a memorable one in the annals of musical history, on account of the unprecedented events which took place during August at Bayreuth, where, as our grandchildren will probably read with wonder and amazement, a devoted band of artists, from pure love of their art, and reverence for Wagner—the man of our day—for three months gave themselves up to the preparation and performance of his master-work, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, in a theatre specially built for the purpose, and thus contributed their full quota towards enabling him to realise a long-cherished scheme, unparalleled in its boldness and extent.

On turning, from an event which has attained a world-wide fame, to home matters, we are at once struck with the growing interest in Wagner and his works which has manifested itself on all sides. As the result of the remarkable success which attended the many presentations of *Lohengrin* at both our Italian Opera-houses in the previous year, this was first evinced by their being followed up early in the season by the production of *Tannhäuser* at the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, as well as by frequent repetitions of *Lohengrin* at both theatres. Later in the year, as the result of curiosity being further stimulated by all that was said and written about the Bayreuth performances, not only was an English version of *Der Fliegende Holländer* brought forward by the Carl Rosa Opera Company at the Lyceum Theatre, but also almost every work of Wagner's suitable for concert use—and, we might add, some others—was over and over again performed in the presence of unprecedentedly numerous and attentive audiences, at the Promenade Concerts, conducted by Sig. Ardit, at Covent Garden Theatre; and the greater part of the programme of a Saturday afternoon's concert at the Crystal Palace was devoted to a selection of his works.

Apart from the production of *Tannhäuser* at Covent Garden, and the *Flying Dutchman* at the Lyceum, the operatic events of the year may be speedily dismissed. Verdi's *Aida*—which, except so far as it served to satisfy curiosity, failed to take its stand by the side of *Tannhäuser*, which it shortly followed—was the only other novelty which Mr. Gye attempted. Relying upon the groundless hope that he would soon be able to remove to new premises upon the Thames Embankment, Mr. Mapleson did not even hint at the possibility of a novelty. By including in his scheme such works as Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Cherubini's *Les Deux Journées*, and the *Flying Dutchman*, Mr. Carl Rosa proved his determination to do the best with the resources at his command to foster a taste for opera of the highest class; but so great was the run upon these, especially the last-named, that he was necessarily obliged to dispense with several works which had been looked for, and to postpone one—Mr. F. H. Cowen's *Pauline*, written expressly for his company—to nearly the close of the season.

The Sacred Harmonic Society—which has now attained its forty-fifth season, and in its time has done much to advance the claims especially of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, but to the exclusion of Bach and Schubert, and other later masters worthy of more than an occasional hearing—seems to have contented

itself with doing what it could to maintain the fame of these. So conservative a policy has been defended on the ground that, owing to the apathy of the public in regard to music of the oratorio class, only such well-known works as the *Messiah*, *Elijah*, *Creation*, &c., when given on an extended scale, are found to be remunerative, and that others involve a loss which the society is but ill able to meet.

The same has been found to be the case at the Royal Albert Hall, where, under the direction of Mr. Barnby and Mr. Carter, a similar course has been in the main pursued.

Such facts, together with Mr. Henry Leslie's experiment of instituting concerts under the title of "Gems from the Oratorios," seems to point to a revolution in English taste in regard to the estimation in which the oratorio school is held.

Nevertheless, we are loth to admit this when we recall the interest excited among musicians, and the overflowing crowds attracted on the two occasions of Bach's Mass in B minor being performed last spring, under the direction of Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, at St. James's Hall. The performance of this grand work in its entirety for the first time in England, was one of the most important undertakings of the year. The success attending it was so great as to lead to the belief that when a sacred musical work of genuine importance is brought forward as a novelty, and with a good prospect of an adequate performance, it will not want an audience.

The Philharmonic Society, the oldest of our orchestral institutions, cannot be said to have done much in its sixty-fourth season, when the usual eight concerts were supplemented by two morning performances, to advance musical art by the production of new works. But two works—viz., Heinrich Hofmann's symphony in E flat ("Frithjof"), dedicated to the Philharmonic Society, and Raff's symphony in C, No. 2—figured in the prospectus as absolute novelties. Neither was brought to a performance; but in their place Rubinstein's "Dramatic" symphony in D minor, No. 4, as well as the same composer's pianoforte concerto in E flat, No. 5, were heard for the first time in England. As quasi novelties of importance, or heard for the first time at these concerts, may be mentioned the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Wagner's overture to *Die Meistersinger*, the scherzo from Rheinberger's symphony, "Wallenstein's Camp," Max Bruch's violin concerto, and Brahms's "German Requiem," which had only been heard in England on one previous occasion—viz., when it was given by this society in 1873.

The new Philharmonic concerts, given under the joint direction of Dr. Wylde and Herr Ganz, were last year relegated to the afternoons, thus making it possible to secure the pick of the opera bands. Among the most important of the works heard for the first time at these concerts were a symphony by Gernsheim, in G minor (Op. 32); overtures by Radecke ("Am Strande"), Sir Julius Benedict, and G. A. Osborne; Rubinstein's concerto in D minor (No. 4), and ballet music from *Feramos*; and, for the second time, Raff's "Lenore" symphony, and pianoforte concerto in C minor. Admirable as was the constitution of the band, its inadequacy for the due presentation of new works of importance, owing to the small time at disposal for rehearsing, could not but be apparent. In consequence of their infrequency, it cannot be said that these concerts are calculated to exert any very decided influence upon musical art progress.

It is to the Crystal Palace, where a greater amount of high-class music is to be heard in the course of the year than in the whole of the metropolis, that we must look

for a directing influence. The policy pursued here may perhaps fairly be described as in the main conservative—as instanced by the high regard very properly shown to the classical school—tempered, as necessity dictates, by a tendency towards liberalism, as seen in the number of modern works which have been brought to trial. Taking into consideration the fact that by the bulk of the subscribers to these concerts the symphonies are undoubtedly regarded as their most salient feature, it is surprising, and not a little disappointing, on looking through the long list of novelties brought forward, to have to state that not a single new symphony was included in the year's operations, unless Liszt's symphonic poem, "Mazeppa," may be accounted as such. Whatever opinion may be entertained as to the merits of this remarkable work, its admission into a Saturday programme seemed to mark an epoch in the course of these concerts, seeing that it was the first occasion of one of Liszt's fifteen symphonic poems being brought to a hearing here. The ice having at last been broken in this direction, it can hardly fail to lead to further explorations being made among Liszt's orchestral works. As among the most important of the novelties presented we recall with pleasure pianoforte concertos by Rubinstein (No. 3, Op. 45), J. F. Barnett (in D minor), Tchaikowsky (in B flat minor, Op. 23), Von Bronsart (in F sharp minor), and Henselt (in F minor); a violin concerto by F. Hegar; a violoncello concerto by J. Raff (Op. 195); overtures by Schumann ("Rheinweinlied"), Tchaikowsky ("Romeo and Juliet"), Raff ("Eine feste Burg"), and Macfarren ("Resurrection"); and among the miscellaneous orchestral pieces an "Intermezzo and Scherzo," by H. Gadsby; Schubert's Grand Duo in C, instrumented by Joachim; the ballet music from Rubinstein's *Feramos*; an allegro for strings by Schubert, and a selection from Wagner, including the so-called Funeral March ("Siegfried's Tod") from *Götterdämmerung*, and the Philadelphia March. Among the greater vocal works, there have been a *Magnificat* by E. Prout, Handel's *Chandos Te Deum* (with orchestral accompaniments by E. Prout), Brahms's cantata for male voices, *Rinaldo*; Mendelssohn's "To the Sons of Art," Gade's "Erl King's Daughter," Handel's "Acis and Galatea," and Dr. Sullivan's "On Sea and Shore." Stage performances of Sophocles's *Antigone* and *Edipus*, and Euripides's *Alcestis*, with music by Mendelssohn and H. Gadsby, given in the Opera Theatre, have manifested a desire to foster a taste for, or at least to make familiar, some of the dramas of antiquity which have occupied the attention of modern musicians.

At the beginning of the year considerable activity was manifested at the Alexandra Palace, which it was thought by some might prove a dangerous rival to the Crystal Palace. Under the able direction of Mr. Weist Hill, an admirable band and choir were organised, and no expense seems to have been spared to secure the best talent available among both vocal and instrumental soloists. Among the most important and most enterprising of Mr. Hill's essays may be mentioned the revival of Handel's *Susanna*, and the presentation (mostly for the first time here) of a symphony by Ludwig Maurer, overtures by J. Waterson ("Tale of Two Cities"), G. A. Osborne ("Forest Maiden"), and H. C. Banister; a pianoforte concerto by W. H. Holmes; concertos for violoncello by Saint-Saëns and R. Volkmann; a gavotte for orchestra by Halberstadt; the ballet music from Silas's MS. opera *Nitocris*; and Gade's "Spring Fantasia," for pianoforte, voices, and orchestra. At the close of the year it is sad to find that the Alexandra Palace has been obliged to close its doors to the public, pending, we suppose, the completion of some scheme of re-organisation.

On the opening of the Royal Aquarium at Westminster,

the experiment was tried of instituting concerts of a high class under the direction of Dr. Sullivan, by whom an excellent orchestra of some sixty performers was organised. They excited, however, but little attention, and Dr. Sullivan soon gave up his post of conductor to Mr. G. Mount, of the British Orchestral Society—an institution which, if not defunct, has at least been inoperative as a concert-giving society during the past year. Of late, perhaps from the fact that the attractions of high-class music have been found to be incompatible with those of an aquarium, a skating-rink, and a tavern, strenuous efforts seem to have been made to render the place attractive, by advertising it as "the pleasantest lounge in London," by imparting variety to the musical and other performances, and by engaging the services of Mr. F. Archer as organist.

At four concerts Mr. Henry Leslie's Choir, which still remains the sole representative in the metropolis of unaccompanied choral music on a large scale, gave evidence of the excellent training for which it has so long been famous. Mendelssohn's music to *Antigone*, a sacred selection, madrigals, and for the most part well-known part-songs, formed the staple of the programmes. That it is Mr. Leslie's aim to maintain a high standard of choral singing rather than to instruct his audience by the introduction of unfamiliar works of excellence, either new or old, seems but too fully apparent.

Turning to the Chamber-music Department—by no means an unimportant one—the Monday and Saturday Popular Concerts, given under the direction of Mr. S. Arthur Chappell, by reason of their number and excellence first claim attention. Admirable as they invariably are, both on account of the music selected and the manner of its interpretation, we cannot but think that Mr. Chappell is wont to underrate the appreciative powers of his audience for new works. It has only been on the rarest occasions that works by Brahms, and one or two other composers of acknowledged excellence, which had not already been heard here, have been brought forward. Even when Professor Joachim was solicited to accord a hearing of Beethoven's posthumous quartets (Op. 130 and 131), it was deemed necessary to institute an extra afternoon concert for their performance. A like timidity at venturing upon anything new or uncommon was also generally manifested at the matinées of the Musical Union. The warm reception accorded to a string quartet by M. Tchaikowsky, and a pianoforte quartet by M. Saint-Saëns at the last matinée of the season, must have gone far to dispel the idea that it is only the well-worn and most familiar works which are fully appreciated. For a hearing of new chamber works of importance, we have had to look principally to M. Coenen and Herr Franke, both of whom have shown themselves boldly enterprising, and have exercised a wise discretion in the choice of new works presented, many of which—especially those by Brahms, Raff, Grieg, Rheinberger, and Svendsen—must sooner or later come to be recognised in a wider arena. To specify but one—Svendsen's octet for strings—each movement of which is as takingly melodious and tellingly effective as it is strikingly original, and at the same time easily appreciable on a first hearing: were this to be adequately presented at St. James's Hall, there cannot be a doubt but that it would rapidly win as great a popularity as Schubert's octet.

Among the most remarkable displays of virtuosity by individual artists who have visited us, and which have taken the form of pianoforte "recitals," it must suffice to enumerate those by Mmes. Schumann, Essipoff, Anna Mehlig, Marie Krebs, Arabella Goddard, and MM. Rubinstein and C. Hallé.

Of so-called Professors' Concerts, we can recall but one at all calculated to exercise an influence upon the condition of musical art—viz., that of Mr. Walter Bache, at which Liszt's oratorio, *The Legend of St. Elisabeth*, with full band and chorus, was brought to an adequate hearing for the first time in English.

The Royal Academy of Music, under the principalship of Professor G. A. Macfarren, has shown a marked progress, as has been instanced by the great increase in the number of the students, their more frequent appearance in public, both in their own new concert-room and at St. James's Hall, and by the good service done at many of our leading concerts by several of the senior students and sub-professors.

A new National Training School for Music, with Dr. Sullivan as principal, was opened at South Kensington in the summer. That such men as Pauer, Prout, Franklin Taylor, Welch, &c., are to be found among the professors engaged, may be taken as a guarantee that good work is being done; but to look for actual results at this early date would be premature.

On looking at the provinces, it is satisfactory to note that the time-honoured triennial meeting of the "Three Choirs," which in the previous year at Worcester degenerated into a mere choral service held in the cathedral, was reinstated at Hereford as a musical festival proper. There are further to be put on record the Edinburgh festival in connection with the "Reid" professorship, and those held at Birmingham and Bristol

well as a Boswell. Schubert's biographer must be a man of a different stamp.

"A man's action," says Emerson, "is the picture-book of his creed." But how many noble creeds are badly or insufficiently illustrated! And even at best it is difficult to escape misinterpreting the pictures. If we wish to judge aright we must keep back our decision till we have seen the whole book, and must not forget to read the letterpress—the circumstances and the motives of the actions—which explains the pictures and fills up the gaps between them. I like the observation of one of our great living novelists, that "until we know what has been or will be the peculiar combination of outward with inward facts, which constitutes a man's critical actions, it will be better not to think ourselves wise about his character." Indeed the outward man with his deeds, words, and manners, is in all, save exceptional cases, but a discoloured, misshapen, and crippled image of the inward man.

A puffy face, neither intellectual nor pleasing, a low forehead, projecting lips, bushy eyebrows, stumpy nose, short curly hair, less than average height, a round back, round shoulders, plump arms and hands, short fingers—such are the touches which the friends of Schubert contributed to his portrait. But as Kreissle von Hellborn remarks, "however uncomely, nay, almost repulsive, his exterior, the spiritual and hidden part was noble." Now this hidden, noble part, which indeed might be suspected from the occasional brightness of his eyes, he revealed only in his music. And if you will know the man, the essence of him and not the husks, you must try to read his life in his works; they are not wanting in an autobiographical basis. It is my opinion that an artist's works are a better commentary on his every-day life, than is this on his works. In his art he realises his better self; the actions of his daily life are the backslidings from and shortcomings of his ideal. The innocent simplicity and chaste grace of Schubert's works tell us a deeper truth than the stories about his drinking propensities. Only in art and poetry a man's inmost nature reveals itself. What he is afraid to whisper to his best friend he confides to his favourite muse. Schubert seems to me to have been one of those beings who pass through life without ever unclosing the inner chambers of their hearts in trustful converse. Not that he was one of the conceited fools who go about crying at the top of their voices that there are none who can understand them, none who can match their super-delicate sensibilities; he knew too well that there were others craving like himself for the precious boon of human sympathy. "No one," he wrote on March 29, 1824, in his diary, "fathoms another's grief, no one another's joy. People think they are ever going to one another, and they only go near one another. Oh, the misery of him who knows this by experience!" That shamefacedness which deters men from imparting their noblest thoughts, their holiest aspirations, their most tender love, should always be well considered in estimating character. The finer and the more delicate the woof of a man's nature, the more timid and reticent he will be in his intercourse with his fellow-creatures, not because he loves them too little, but because he loves them too much. He sees so much commonplace insignificance, so much vulgarity and meanness around him, that in his dread of ridicule—which he knows would follow if he discovered himself to the wrong person—he becomes to all appearance commonplace (if not vulgar and mean) himself, deceiving others as perhaps they deceive him. What a thought full of comfort, that the world is not so bad as it appears, that by watching patiently we may get occasional glimpses of beautiful light blinking through the chinks and crannies of the housings of conventionality which men

FRANZ SCHUBERT: A STUDY.

By FR. NIECKS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE biography of this composer has yet to be written. Kreissle von Hellborn's "Life of Franz Schubert," a meritorious work, no doubt, is rather a useful collection of facts and dates than a life: it contains some of the materials which make up the man—the clay, earth, water, &c.—but they are still waiting for a Prometheus to fashion them and infuse a soul into them.

Otto Jahn, the biographer of Mozart, remarks that one wrongs great men in palliating and denying their weaknesses, that one has done everything if one has tried to understand them. How true, but also how difficult! Is it not with biography as with portraiture? If the artist follow Cromwell's injunction to Peter Lely, not to omit any warts and moles, he may indeed produce a faithful transcript of the outward man at a given moment of time; but if he wish to produce a portrait characteristic of the whole man, mind and body—a living likeness, recalling the past, true to the present, and foreshadowing the future—he must discern the accidental excrescences and the essential lineaments, he must seek beneath the transitory twitchings, scowls, smiles, and pouts, the permanent fundamental expression. Boswell, for instance, was no more than a painstaking copyist who painted his sitter in all possible attitudes, and at all possible times, imitating indiscriminately, and with the minuteness and perseverance of a Denner, whatever he saw. That he, nevertheless, produced a work of great significance, and enabled those gifted with the requisite genius, i.e., insight—which he lacked—to form out of his rich store of facts a true life-portrait, is owing to the demonstrative character and peculiar life-circumstances of Johnson. Not every man's outward life is a fit subject for a book. To write so delightful a work as Boswell's "Life of Samuel Johnson," to portray a character so faithfully, requires a Johnson as

build around their souls, and discover love, self-denial, and high aims where we least expected them, even in the apparently cold-hearted, selfish, and pleasure-loving. No doubt, with more faith and confidence, there would be a pleasanter world, and fewer uninteresting people.

But to return to Schubert. It would be a mistake to suppose that the unsatisfied yearning for a fuller outpouring and a more equal exchange of love—in short, for one who would be a friend to the whole man, not only to the outer layers—made him brood in despair over the thought of his solitariness. It merely imparted to his mental complexion a soft tinge of melancholy which was often drowned by the pleasures of the moment, and only in times of affliction took possession of him with such oppressive strength as we noticed in the extract quoted from his diary. Schubert, in his simple, good-natured, guileless way, enjoyed to the full the pleasures which nature and the society of his friends—kind, well-meaning friends, as well as others of a lighter sort, he did not lack—offered him.

The business of his life was to compose, or, I would rather say, to sing. Once or twice he allowed himself to be persuaded by his friends to apply for some post which would have secured him a certain income, but his distaste for any regular employment, be it that of a teacher or conductor, was so strong, that in general he obstinately refused to listen to advice of that sort; for he could be obstinate where his priceless independence and his peace of mind were at stake. He did not like the idea of being caged; he must be free as the bird in the air. How grievous he must have felt the time he passed as assistant-master at his father's school may be easily imagined. Let us forgive the hard knocks which the gentle Franz, in his impatience and ill-humour, so liberally distributed among his small pupils, and draw a veil over this picture of misapplied energies.

Of all the critics who have written about Schubert, it was perhaps Schumann who furnished us with the most valuable hints for the right understanding and appreciation of our composer. As among his most significant sayings may be cited this one—"That the relation of Schubert to Beethoven is that of a woman to a man." The judgment of the musician received confirmation from science, the doctors who were present at the disinterment of Schubert's remains, in 1863, expressing their astonishment at the delicate, almost womanly organisation of his skull. Are Schumann's words to be taken in Schopenhauer's sense, that man has more reason, woman more instinct?

Schubert has neither the compelling power of Beethoven, who now raises us aloft to heights where our eyes are blinded with a supernatural brightness of thought, now again plunges us down to the bottom of the heart, and sounds a note, the intensity of which makes us tremble with holy awe and wondering delight; nor has he the fantastic play of Schumann's imagination, the deep, gorgeous tints of his tones, the passion that sometimes almost scorches us; still less has he the brilliant calculativeness, the cultivated refinement of Mendelssohn. Schubert is a child of nature, a man of feeling—not of intellect, passion, or conventionality—full of tenderness, and gentle warmth of affection, joying in life and nature.

If we know Schubert's excellencies, it will not be difficult to guess his shortcomings: for, "where there is genius, the characteristic defects always point to the characteristic beauties." Thus with Schubert: the delicate sensitiveness of a heart whose strings respond sympathetically to the emotional vibration of all things and thoughts that are in any way akin to it, the natural grace and easy flow of expression, point at once to the want of concentrative power, of comprehensive thought.

One of these characteristics calls for more particular attention, namely, the easy flow of expression, as it is as much a defect as it is one of the beauties of his music.

Schubert's productiveness is truly prodigious; like Lope de Vega he may be called "el monstruo de naturaleza." Take for instance the year 1815, the eighteenth of his life, in which he composed over a hundred songs, one of which was the "Erlking," half a dozen operas and melodramas, church music (mass in G), chamber-music, symphonies, and music for the piano. The Spanish poet is said to have written on an average five sheets per day. Has it ever been calculated what *quantum* was done by our composer? It would be, if not very useful, at least very interesting, to know this. That Schubert wrote too much cannot be doubted, nor that with more labour and selection he might have left us more perfect works. The Abbé Marolles' reply to the poet who told him that his verses cost him little,—"They cost you what they are worth,"—although not applicable in its full force to a "prodigy of nature" such as Schubert, is not without significance even in his case. What he was capable of, what heights he was able to reach, some of his larger works show. But if Schubert wronged himself by writing too much, endangering thereby his position as one of the great classical composers, his friends and admirers wrong him still more by publishing indiscriminately his works, many of which he himself thought unworthy of him, and never would have consented to send into the world. The inadequate appreciation which many people, more especially musicians, have of Schubert's genius, is owing to the great number of weak works which prevent the better ones from being clearly seen, and dilute, so to speak, the composer's merit. Indeed, the works of no composer stand so much in need of a careful selection being made of them, as those of Schubert. However, Mendelssohn also has good reason to cry from his grave, "Heaven protect me from my friends!" Nothing more fatal could have been devised against this great artist's reputation than the publication of some of his posthumous works. Nay, rather suppress; that is what Time does. By purification, by the separation of the dross from the true metal, he creates the hero on which coming ages gaze with wonder. No one is a hero to his valet, and our admiration would be considerably diminished if we saw all the *brouillons* and uninspired effusions of our celebrated poets and musicians. Of course Schubert's was a peculiar case. Only a very small portion of his works was published during his life-time, and long after his death many of his best works remained hidden in the coffers—and in worse places—of his friends and publishers; this, however, does not diminish, but rather increases the heavy responsibility of his editors.

With our present knowledge of Schubert, the slowness of public recognition seems monstrous, inexplicable; and even if we take into account the time and order of publication of his works, we cannot but be amazed. As late as 1835—that is, seven years after the composer's death—we find Schumann writing of him as one "whom many know only as a composer of songs, whom by far the most know scarcely by name." During his life-time his reputation was neither wide nor high, and the little he had he owed to his songs. Let us have a look at the surest barometer of fame—publishers' letters. There is first one from the Leipzig publisher, Peters, addressed to Schubert's friend, Josef Hüttenbrenner, who had tried to make an opening for our composer. The letter is dated Nov. 14, 1822, and the short and long of it is, that so young and little-known a composer could hardly expect to be enrolled in the list of the great masters favoured by Herr Peters, such as Spohr, Hummel, Romberg, &c. But he would

see what could be done; let the young man send some of his best compositions, and should they be sent back, let him bear it meekly. Breitkopf and Härtel, to whom Schubert had offered some works, wrote on Sept. 9, 1826:—"Being as yet unacquainted with the marketable success of your compositions" (I rather admire the natural, healthy tone of this language) "and unable, in consequence, to make any definite pecuniary offer for the first work, or first works, you purpose sending us, you will be content to receive in return a certain number of copies." And Schott and Sons, who had undertaken to publish some of Schubert's compositions, and had asked him to put a price on them, thought that 60 florins for his quintett, Op. 114, was rather extravagant, the pianoforte part occupying only six printed pages.* Herr Schubert must surely have made a mistake—was not 30 florins enough? Poor Schubert, it is evident from this, got small reward in coin and fame for the works which, since then, have charmed millions and will yet charm millions. What has become of the great masters Romberg, Hummel, and Spohr? Romberg is forgotten, Hummel only partly and dimly remembered, and even the more robust memory of Spohr is greedily gnawed at by Time. The fame of Schubert began to dawn upon the world when Schumann wrote the enthusiastic criticisms of his works in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and when—in 1839, eleven years after the composer's death—at Schumann's instigation, Mendelssohn brought out for the first time the great C major symphony at the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts. Since then the sun of that fame has risen higher and higher—so high, indeed, that a further ascent seems to be impossible.

As Schubert's real life has to be read in his works, we shall now direct our attention to them. In reality, it is they that fill up the interval between the terms of his life—his birth on the 31st January, 1797, and his death on the 19th November, 1828; for of other events it is peculiarly barren. We may, however, have occasion to speak, in the course of this study, of Schubert's outward life-circumstances. The course I purpose to take in the following survey of his works is this: to consider first his compositions for the pianoforte alone, then to proceed to those for more than one instrument—his chamber-music, symphonies, &c.; after that to examine his concerted vocal music, and finally the songs—his greatest achievements; dwelling on what is significant and characteristic, passing by what is of less or no importance.

THE PIANOFORTE WORKS.

In this province of his art, Schubert has created many things which, in workmanship as well as in subject-matter, are of inferior value; many also which, although rich in delightful thoughts, are imperfect as wholes; many, lastly, which are satisfying in every respect, and have opened new paths and vistas—not broad and wide-sweeping, but pleasant and beautiful. Although in his larger instrumental works Schubert is often under the influence of stronger natures, more especially that of Beethoven, he has a distinct individuality; and whenever he is at his best, it is found impressed on contents and style. He is always himself in the smaller pieces, but, not to undervalue them, we must remember that he wrote before Chopin, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, when *Lieder ohne Worte*, *Phantasiesstücke*, &c., were unknown. His was still the age of Variations. Every one wrote Variations, from Beethoven down to the merest scribbler of notes.

And what was not a theme with variations was either a rondo or a sonata. It was the fashionable form of the day, and occupied the place which our drawing-room fantasias, and much more of the same kind, do now. The classical dance-music of Bach had gone out of fashion, the elegant miniatures of the French school had been forgotten. Field, it is true, had lately originated the nocturne, a notable achievement; but he had not life and blood enough to influence musical thought. Now, on comparing dates, we shall find that Schubert's *Moments Musicaux* and *Impromptus* are the first instalment of the emotional and fantastic pianoforte literature which was soon to astonish and delight the world—in short, they indicate the dawn of Romanticism. But the shorter forms were a product of the time, and not of any particular man. Given the emotional expressiveness of the musical language attained by Beethoven, they were the natural consequences. Beethoven was no miniature-painter; he required a large canvas, or he would have left us more than a few Bagatelles. His contemporaries and successors were of a different mental complexion. Schubert's pianoforte works have exercised a greater influence on the modern composers for this instrument than is generally admitted. Schumann acknowledged his indebtedness. It cannot be said that Schubert developed the *technique* of the pianoforte to such an extent as Chopin and Schumann, but, imbuing his music as he did with a new spirit, he could not fail to create also new effects, and they were for the most part what I would call, for want of a better expression, effects of colour. Schumann says that Schubert, "as a composer for the pianoforte, has the advantage over others—in some respects even over Beethoven (admirably and delicately as the latter heard in his imagination during his deafness)—namely, in that he knows how to write in a style suited to the piano; that is, everything sounds directly out of the depth of the instrument; whilst with Beethoven, for example, we have to borrow the tone-colour from the horn, oboe, &c." Schumann's criticisms of Schubert's works are very valuable, but have to be received with caution. He himself writes, in one of his latest critical utterances on our composer: "There was a time when I did not like to speak of Schubert, except at night, when I told the trees and stars of him. Who is not, at one time or other, an enthusiast?" Well, Schumann, the critic, never lost his enthusiasm, though, in the course of time, it may have somewhat cooled down. In the case in question, therefore, we have to make allowance for it. There is no doubt some truth in what Schumann says, but he asserts a little too much. If Schubert, in some instances, wrote in a style more particularly suited to the pianoforte than Beethoven ever did, the latter, on the other hand, never wrote so awkwardly and thoughtlessly as Schubert may be accused of having occasionally done. Beethoven's sonatas remind you often of the oboe, the horn, and other instruments, but they never sound, like some compositions of Schubert, as if they were an arrangement of an orchestral work. We shall have occasion to speak of this again in the course of the following remarks. Let us begin with the sonatas, of which there are ten. (Vol. I. of Pauer's Octavo Edition of Schubert's Pianoforte Works.)

Sonata, Op. 42, in A minor.—The first movement opens with a melancholy strain—it is as if we felt upon us the gaze of two clear eyes, pensive and questioning. Then we hear quicker pulsations of the heart, loud, beseeching exclamations, which, however, soon give way to the starts and helpless flutterings of an uneasy mind—he cannot defy Fate. Life is to him a puzzle which he gives up. The most he can do is to bear patiently what must be borne, and, if possible, to forget. And how much does

* In a recent edition of Schubert's Quintett, Op. 114, the pianoforte part occupies 64 pages.—Ed. M. M. R.

the world not offer to help him in this—the lovely flowers at his feet, the murmuring streamlet running by, the merry birds chirping and chanting on the trees, and above the glorious sky. These beneficent influences get the upper hand in the following movements, after the composer has revolved and vented his melancholy thoughts in the first.

The various fluctuations of the restless mood which I have tried to describe, naturally find expression in short and changeful strains and phrases. Those of which the principal portion of the first part is composed are given in illustration No. 1:—

No. 14



The second portion contains the following two strains, of which No. 2, δ , is a metamorphosis of No. 2, α :—

No. 2.



The conclusion of the first part is built out of material from the first portion (No. 1, *a* and *a'*).

In the second part the composer considers and reconsiders the first question (No. 1, *a*), after which follows the repeat of the first and second portions of the first part—the latter now in A major (Pauer's Edition, page 7)—and a long coda wherein he persistently broods over the old, unsolved difficulty, or grievance (No. 1, *a* and *d*).

The second movement is an andante with variations. Were Schubert not the incomparable songster we know him to be, one would be inclined to think that he caught the melody from the mouth of a country maiden, to whose singing he had listened unseen by her, so beautifully simple, so innocently pure, so naturally charming, even to the little grace-notes, is it. In the first two variations the composer plays so fondly with it, that one perceives at once how it has taken possession of his heart and fancy.

But the theme furnishes also stuff for more serious thoughts, as the third variation, in C minor, shows:—

No. 3.



Do the harsh dissonances speak of fears manfully faced? The soothing thoughts of the variations in A flat major (Pauer's Edition, pages 11, 12) cannot at once calm the agitation of the soul; not till the last variation, in C major, is perfect serenity restored, which now has the freshness of a summer's day after a thunderstorm.

The scherzo is full of life and motion—a scherzo indeed. The trio I should like to call *intermezzo*—the reapers returning home from their work, their song purified and idealised by distance, interrupting the sport and fun of the scherzo proper.

The concluding movement—the rondo—is quite delicious. The maidenly garrulity of the first subject, full of sprightliness and natural grace; the energetic second subject, and how they answer one another—now teasing, now entreating—run after one another, play hide-and-seek, showing their smiling and grimacing faces from all possible and impossible corners; now flee from each other, now walk arm-in-arm, or are lovingly intertwined—all this must be heard from the composer himself. The following illustration shows the beginning of the first, and two phrases from the second subject, one or the other of which you will recognise in any part of the movement:

No. 4



Kreissle von Hellborn speaks of this rondo as a rapid Hungarian dance tune ; not being an adept in Hungarian

music, I cannot say how far Schubert is indebted to foreign sources; but, whatever the loan may be, he has put it to good account and increased it a thousandfold.

A subdued tone of melancholy, transiently interrupted by moments of agitation, and often difficult to distinguish from happy contentment; serener moods of quiet joyousness, or innocent sport, characterise this sonata, and the sonata characterises Schubert. In it we have the keynote of his character. The man's nature and the outcome of it—his best works—are idyllic. The world he builds up is different from the one we inhabit, the society to which he introduces us has other rules than the one in the midst of which we move: on the one side there are innocent affection, freedom, and peaceful enjoyment; on the other violent passion, stiff conventionality, and hot pursuit of pleasure and riches, or overstrained intellectuality. Can it be amiss to pay sometimes a visit to that serener sphere?

(To be continued.)

BRAHMS'S SYMPHONY.

NEVER, we suppose, has any composer's first symphony been looked forward to by musicians with so much interest as that recently put forth by Johannes Brahms; never has a symphony excited so much attention on its first performance; never has one been so frequently played in different places within the space of a few days of its first production. Looking back, however, upon the activity which Brahms has displayed during the last twenty years or more as the composer of two orchestral suites, a pianoforte concerto, a number of concerted chamber-music works of the highest grade, several large vocal works, including a "German Requiem" and a cantata, "Rinaldo," together with a vast amount of pianoforte pieces, songs, &c., the worth of which has been widely recognised, this is no more than was to be expected. That sooner or later a composer of such high aspirations and so richly endowed must deliver himself of a symphony, was long ago a foregone conclusion; and the longer he has delayed, the more has curiosity increased as to what he would have to say new in this, the greatest of instrumental forms, as well as how he would express himself.

Brahms's first symphony (in C minor) was performed for the first time in public, under the direction of its composer, on the 4th of November last, at Carlsruhe; on the 7th of the same month at Mannheim; and a few days later at Munich. Each performance was attended by a vast number of musicians from far and near, and expectation by no means seems to have been disappointed.

From reference to a letter of Herr Richard Pohl, which has appeared in the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt*, and by the courtesy of a correspondent in Strasburg, we are enabled to offer our readers a few particulars concerning this new and long-expected work. No one who is familiar with Brahms's previous essays will be surprised to hear that his new symphony, which comprises five movements, requiring three-quarters of an hour for performance, is laid out on the broadest lines, that it is rich in its ideas, consistent in its general style, masterly in construction, noble in expression, and, by the deeply earnest, almost tragic, character which pervades it, is strongly marked by all the traits which we have been wont to associate with the name of Brahms. Its expressive diction, which rises from passion to vehemence, suggests the idea that it is based upon a logical train of poetic thought—in short, that it is "programme" music, but without a given "programme." Hitherto Brahms has shown no desire to break through traditional forms; the broad forms of Beethoven have sufficed to display the individuality of his mode of thought.

Depth and novelty of matter have been his aim rather than new forms of expression. But in this symphony he seems to have reached the point where traditional forms become inconvenient and insufficient for his purpose. Strictly as he adheres to the "sonata" form in its widest dimensions in the first movement, little as the scherzo offers that is new in this direction, in the last two movements he exercises a freedom which, in more than one particular, recalls the Choral Symphony of Beethoven.

Brahms's symphony commences with a short, pathetic introduction (*sostenuto*), ushering in an allegro (*alla breve*), the first subject of which, starting with a sequence of dissonant chords, is of a restless, passionate character, and is well contrasted with the second subject, to which it is led by connecting matter thematically derived from the *sostenuto*. The whole of the first section is repeated; in the "working out" Brahms's skill in thematic development is seen at its best. An extended code, which follows the transposition of the first part, closes the movement in a comparatively quiet manner. Notwithstanding its generally stirring character, with a prudent moderation, trombones are reserved for the final movements.

The second movement (*♩, poco adagio*) is not in E flat, as one might have expected, but in E major, and thus, by its tone-colouring, furnishes a contrast of greater intensity to the first movement. Its melodic flow, though melancholy and languishing, is strikingly beautiful. Important solos, assigned to the oboe, clarinet, horn, and violin, constitute the luminous point of a richly-coloured and harmonious tone-picture.

The most concise in form, and the least striking in its train of thought, is the allegretto grazioso in A flat, *♩*, which follows, and the middle section of which, strangely enough, stands in B major (*♩, l'istesso tempo*). Properly speaking, it is no scherzo, the fun and frolic of which would have but ill accorded with the general seriousness of the work, but is rather to be regarded as a tender idyll, which, as a brief intermezzo, offers a welcome point of rest, but as quickly vanishes.

A second adagio in C minor, *♩*, brings back the tragic element in all its might. It opens with tones of the deepest pain and complaining; suddenly an unisonal passage, *pizzicato*, from the entire string band breaks in, and grows quicker and quicker; the thunder of drums puts to flight the threatening clouds; the sun breaks forth (violins in their highest register), horn and flute unite in an affecting supplicatory duet, and now, for the first time, the trombones enter with a solo of a quieting, chorale-like character, which closes the movement *religioso*.

The finale (*allegro con brio*, *♩*, C major) starts briskly and joyfully with the following national-song-like theme, given out by the horns:—



Its strong family likeness to the "Lied an die Freude" in the ninth symphony will not pass unobserved. That it too stands for a "song of joy" cannot be doubted. Often as it is repeated, and always with additional force, it does not reign undisturbed. Once more well up the fateful clouds and cast their shadow around it; once more to the attack, and a final thunder-clap dispels them; and now, by way of conclusion, bursts forth a jubilant song of triumph, which bears a close affinity to the *religioso* for the trombones in the second adagio.

That Brahms has produced a symphony worthy of his reputation there can hardly be a doubt. The work is about to be published by Simrock, of Berlin, and will probably be heard for the first time in England at a concert to be given at Cambridge in May next, on the occasion of Herr Brahms's visit to receive the degree of Mus.Doc. offered him last year by the University.

SCHUBERT'S OPERA "DER HÄUSLICHE KRIEG" IN LEIPZIG.

THIS opera is one of the novelties which Dr. Förster, the new lessee of the Leipzig Theatre, has produced, and considering how rarely it is given, it is really a privilege to have heard it. It has been produced in Vienna, but I understand that in this town it has not seen the stage ever since 1868, so that it is practically a novelty. And its production does the more credit to the managers, because it shows their desire to cultivate classical comic opera, which under the last *régime* had been much neglected. It has, moreover, gone far to silence the clamorous complaints of the good folk of Leipzig, that the new lessee had lowered the standard of their opera. And truly, the lessee of the Leipzig Theatre does not rest on a bed of roses; for the typical Leipziger is not to be trifled with. Of his theatre he is at least as proud as Brother Jonathan is of the United States' Constitution. He knows that it is perhaps the only theatre in the Empire which not only pays its way without any subsidy, but yields a handsome profit; and the very idea that a lessee, and stranger to boot, should be amassing wealth, is abominable to him. Hence it is that the lessee for the time being is generally abused till he blesses the day on which his contract with the Municipality expires; but no sooner is he gone, than the good town folk bemoan the loss of the departed, and set themselves to abuse the new possessor of their gold mine. With them, as with the Wagner school generally, action is the first, good singing and correct intonation the second, requisite in an artist. Those who, like myself, believe in the beauty of *canto italiano* as such, prefer the second requisite when both cannot be fulfilled together; but *de gustibus non est disputandum*. It is the humble opinion of an impartial observer, that if under the late *régime* the Leipzig opera was good, under the new it is in every respect better, and the manner in which Schubert's delicious opera is put on the stage fully confirms that impression.

Schubert wrote *Der Häusliche Krieg* in 1823, but the original title of the opera was *Die Verschworenen*. This title was objected to by the Censor, and hence *The Conspirators* were converted into *The Domestic War*. The libretto is nothing more or less than an adaptation from Aristophanes' *Lisistrata*, and the dramatic action resolves itself as follows:—

Heribert, Lord of Lüdenstein, and the knights who rallied round his banner, have set out on the crusade against the Saracens. Their wives are longing for their return, and the thought that their husbands prefer honour on the battle-field to love so incenses them that, under the leadership of Ludmilla, Countess of Lüdenstein, they hold counsel together, and determine to receive the knights on their return with coldness and indifference. While this solemn council is being held at Heribert's castle, Udolin, the page, suddenly arrives, and announces the immediate return of his master and of his followers. Udolin is let into the terrible secret by the indiscretion of Ludmilla's maid, and he of course divulges it to the knights on their arrival. They at once decide to frustrate the design by meeting their spouses with even greater

indifference. Husbands and wives meet in the hall of the castle in two separate groups, and on both sides coldness is feigned with great success. But to the unspeakable surprise of the ladies, the cavaliers retire in a body, and repair to their repast. Already there are signs of rebellion amongst the conspirators of the fair sex; and as Ludmilla is reminding them of their solemn vow, her maid rushes in, and informs them that Count Heribert has been drinking—O horror!—not to the health of the ladies, but to success in war; that the knights have unanimously announced their intention to start again after a short rest, and that until they have earned new laurels they will hold no communion with their wives. This is too much even for Ludmilla. She asks a private interview with Heribert, but he remains cold, and leaves the room after exchanging a few conventional phrases with his wife. The ladies are disconsolate, and are heaping reproaches on their leader, when Udolin comes to confide to the countess that a terrible vow binds the knights; for when surrounded by Saracens without any apparent hope of escape, they swore in future only to fight for the Faith, and to leave their homes, unless their wives appeared in armour before them ready to take the field. Happy thought! Armour is quickly procured for all the ladies, and when the knights come in a body to take their leave, they are so overcome by this proof of devotion, that they admit their defeat, and the vow on the battle-field having proved an invention, the conspiracy is at an end, and the domestic war promises to be but the forerunner of greater domestic bliss.

The opera, in one act, consists of eleven numbers, which are connected by dialogue. No less than six numbers are choruses, three are airs, and two are duets. It is almost unnecessary to say that, true to Schubert's individuality, every number is purely lyrical; the same flow of melody, the same breadth and *abandon* which are the characteristic feature of every one of his compositions, are also noticeable in this most charming little work. He did not stop to inquire whether this or that part wanted lengthening or shortening, whether a little more dramatic action would heighten the effect here or there. It is all the natural outflow of an inexhaustible lyric genius. The most fascinating parts of the opera are undoubtedly the choruses, of which No. 7, the male chorus, alternating with the female chorus, is of exquisite beauty. There is no "word-painting" in the accompaniment; Schubert needed no auxiliary forces of that kind to cover poverty of melody; a refined classical simplicity pervades the whole from beginning to end, and in the total absence of any attempt at dramatic effect, the merits of the work are purely musical.

The *mise-en-scène*, the dresses, and the appurtenances, are exceedingly good, and the managers have caught the true spirit of the work by bringing into the field a large and efficient chorus. The absence of an introduction to the opera is supplied by the well-known overture to *Rosamunde*, which is preceded by Weber's operetta, *Abu Hassan*—assuredly a most attractive programme, and one which commends itself strongly to the attention of the energetic *impresario* of the English opera at the Lyceum.

C. P. S.

A NEW GRADUS AD PARNASSUM.

IN calling the attention of musical students to the issue of a new *Gradus ad Parnassum*, by Herr Pauer, the first section of which—containing twelve "Studies," by J. N. Hummel, L. Berger, C. Mayer, L. Köhler, Ch. Czerny, F.

Chopin, Mendelssohn, C. E. F. Weyse, J. C. Kessler, and Liszt—Messrs. Augener & Co. have announced as "ready this day," we cannot do better than print in full the prefatorial remarks of Herr Pauer, in explanation of its aim, and in justification of the appearance of such a work at this date. Herr Pauer writes:—

"It was in 1817 that Muzio Clementi published his great collection of original studies, called "*Gradus ad Parnassum*, ou l'art de jouer le piano-forte, démontré par des Exercices dans le style sévère et dans le style élégant." In this justly celebrated work, which, if not very popular, yet commands universal respect, Clementi applied all the experience he had gained during many years of earnest and persevering industry. The chief value of Clementi's studies is found in their immediate and beneficial effect on the development of technical execution, in their variety of expression, and solidity of construction. By studying them, we, who have not heard Clementi play, may form an accurate judgment concerning the characteristic features and the style of his performance. Among the Italian composers for the clavichord—the forerunner of the piano-forte—it was Domenico Scarlatti (1683—1760) alone, who greatly influenced the development of a brilliant style of execution; the other Italian composers, Benedetto Marcello (1686—1739, *Sonatas*), Francesco Durante (1693—1766, *Studi e Divertimenti*), Baldassaro Galuppi (1703—1785, *Sonatas and Toccatas*), Padre Martini (1706—1784, *Sonatas*), Domenico Paradisi (1712—1795, *Sonatas*), Giuseppe Sarti (1730—1802), Antonio Sacchini (1735—1786, *Sonatas for Clavichord and Violin*), exhibit in their writings for our instrument only a very moderate degree of inventive ingenuity with regard to technical brilliancy of execution. Clementi, on the other hand, was well acquainted with the important works of the illustrious Sebastian Bach; he cherished a strong predilection for the agreeable sonatas of Emanuel Bach; and when in his 29th year, in 1781, he met Mozart in the Imperial Palace of Vienna, both invited by that true patron of musical art, the Emperor Joseph II., he was wonderfully influenced by the euphony, grace, and smoothness of the performance and compositions of the immortal author of *Don Giovanni*. He accordingly showed a far greater ingenuity and mastery of the instrument, not only in his compositions, but also in his performance; moreover, during his stay in England, from 1766 until 1780, Clementi played and practised on much better instruments than his countrymen in Italy possessed. Whilst the Italians generally composed operas and sacred works of large dimensions for voices and orchestra, Muzio Clementi wrote solely for the piano-forte, which was his only medium of expression. The piano-forte was therefore everything to Clementi; and the key-board became the exponent of every idea that crossed his mind. Accordingly, these ideas adapted themselves by degrees to the nature of the instrument; and thus his sonatas and studies may with truth be called types of piano-forte composition. It is therefore not to be wondered at that he invented effects, passages, figures, combinations; indeed, that, Columbus-like, he discovered a new world on the piano-forte. In every art we find that two opposite tendencies show themselves most distinctly: the *intellectual* and the *mechanical*. Just as little as the world could profit by the existence alone of intellectual professors and men of genius, so little could we enjoy a life, which consisted merely of so-called comforts, produced by mechanical contrivances, and not varied by intellectual gifts. The importance of mechanical or technical excellence must never be underrated; it is just the excellence of technical execution, the apt and natural exponent of

genius, which makes intellectual greatness comprehensible; indeed, technical execution is the garb in which we present to the listener the intellectual substance of the work. And for this reason Clementi is entitled to great respect: he gave an immense impetus to mechanical execution, not only by inventing new passages, but also by reducing the art of fingering to a regular, reliable, and practical system. We may therefore assert that Clementi's "*Gradus*," consisting of one hundred exercises, is for the pianist one of the most important subjects of careful investigation and earnest study.

"At the same time it cannot be denied that the work has one weak point: for the inventive power of Clementi, there are too many studies. To compose one hundred studies of considerable length, to infuse into each of them a separate fascination, and to render each one brilliant, useful, and agreeable, is a task which only the transcendent genius of a Sebastian Bach could fulfil. Without the slightest wish to express anything detrimental to the well-earned fame and universally acknowledged merit of Clementi's "*Gradus ad Parnassum*," it cannot be denied that certain studies, in reality amounting to movements of sonatas (Nos. 38, 42, 55, 58, 61, 62), have been most likely accepted for want of other material. This fact has been already judiciously recognised by the late Carl Tausig, who selected from among the hundred studies twenty-nine which contain, so to say, the essence of the work. It was sixty years ago (1817) that Clementi's "*Gradus*" first appeared. Since that time technical execution has made immense progress. Many passages or figures, of which we recognise merely a germ in Clementi's compositions, have grown to large dimensions; the richer-toned modern pianos have suggested a variety of effects which Clementi could not have foreseen; the wider compass of the instrument invited "gymnastic evolutions," as Beethoven already used to call the technical feats, for which the keyboard at Clementi's time scarcely offered room enough. The stronger, more solid construction of the piano, the universal adaptation of iron plates and barring, or framing, necessary to allow the use of thicker, heavier strings—all this transformed the piano of Clementi from the chamber-instrument into the chamber-orchestra. Indeed, the tendency to widen the sphere of piano-forte-playing, to increase the effects by means of polyphony and extreme dexterity of manipulation is everywhere recognisable.

"To place before the musical student a collective work, a summary of what has been done in the last sixty years in the different branches of piano-forte-playing, and to entitle such a collection of studies a "*NEW GRADUS AD PARNASSUM*," seems to me justifiable. The division into different schools, such as the School of the Legato, Staccato, Shake, Arpeggio, &c., appeared to me, as a practical teacher, the most comprehensible and reasonable method. In these different divisions the studies have been arranged in the order of their increasing difficulty. I may here observe that two of the studies I have thought it right to include in the school of octave-playing, by Beethoven and Hummel respectively, date from an earlier time than 1817. On the other hand, it appeared to me unnecessary to include the studies of J. B. Cramer, Moscheles, Sterndale Bennett, Herz, Bertini, Aloys Schmitt, Dreyschock, Rubinstein, and even those of Czerny, Heller, Thalberg, Schulhoff, and other eminent composers, except, perhaps, in single instances, on the ground that these well-known studies have already a place in the musical library of every industrious student; and practical experience has taught the fact that nothing is more injurious to the reputation of a new work than the

suspicion of undue elaboration, or duplication of what is already possessed.

"The materials from which to select was indeed exceedingly rich; and at times the task of choosing from among so many clever and distinguished examples was far from easy. My endeavour has been to provide good and practical examples for every phase of technical execution, and at the same time to introduce works of composers until now not generally known, or, at least, not much used in this country, but whose merit entitled them to cordial recognition: among these I may mention Weyse, Berger, Kessler, Köhler, Bendel, Löschhorn, Taubert, Alkan, and Seeling. The insertion in this collection of two studies of my own composition may be accepted as offering specimens respectively for a particular style of octave-playing, and for development of execution by the left hand only, for which I could not find other available examples.

"With the hope that this 'New Gradus ad Parnassum' may meet with as much approval and favour as its preparation has given me pleasure, I recommend it with all confidence to the attention of the student and of the musical public.

"E. PAUER."

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, December, 1876.

At the seventh Gewandhaus-concert we renewed our acquaintance, made twenty-two years ago, with the celebrated violinist, Henri Wieniawsky. This excellent artist rendered Beethoven's Violin-concerto and the "Ungarischen Lieder" by Ernst with exquisite finish. His prominent qualities are a refined elegance and pure sonorous tone, combined with great smoothness and complete command of his instrument. The rest of the evening was taken up with orchestral works, all capitally executed. Mozart's D major Symphony (without minuet)—one of those sublimely lucid productions which will always be considered revelations of the inmost soul of music—headed the programme. The second part of the concert presented two newer pieces, viz., a Serenade (No. 2, in F major) for strings, by Robert Volkmann, which we have repeatedly mentioned with approbation and pleasure, and two pieces from the ballet-music of Rubinstein's *Feramosa*, which also deserve attention, and again impressed us favourably, as on the occasion of their first performance here two years ago.

Not being in a position to notice the eighth Gewandhaus-concert, I append an extract from the *Signale*:—

"The eighth Gewandhaus-concert, which took place on the 30th of November, produced in orchestral works, firstly, the well-known and favourite Overture to Cherubini's 'Water-carrier,' and secondly, a novelty of the latest date, Jadassohn's Third Symphony (in D minor). Mme. Clara Schumann was the pianist, while Mme. Schmitt-Csanyi (wife of Aloys Schmitt, Hofcapellmeister at Schwerin) represented the singing. Giving the precedence to Mme. Schmitt-Csanyi, as the latest comer, we mention that she sang, to quote the programme, the so-called 'Brief' aria from Mozart's *Don Juan*, 'Die junge Nonne,' and 'Lachen und Weinen,' by Schubert, and two Hungarian 'Volkslieder.' This lady has a fresh, sound, and well-trained voice. Her performance lacked, however, warmth and feeling. She seems to aim at pleasing in graceful and tender parts, and for this reason appeared to the greatest advantage in the second song by Schubert, and in the Hungarian melodies (one of which, introduced in Brahms's 'Hungarian Dances,' is well known). In the aria from *Don Juan* (which in the *colorature* was also deficient), and in 'Die junge Nonne,' we liked her less. Public opinion was, however, at variance with ours, for Mme. Schmitt-Csanyi was warmly applauded, and obliged to sing an encore.

"Jadassohn's symphony, the orchestral novelty of the evening,

excellently played under the direction of the composer, won an honourable success, which we think was well merited. It not only betokens the same skilful construction, natural invention, and melodious character as Jadassohn's former works, but shows that he has also advanced a step in profundity and fervour. This is more particularly noticeable in the first movement, which seems to us not only its best, but also the best that Jadassohn has produced. Nor does the Andante lack depth of invention, but (in spite of its middle portion being in a different and more lively tempo) the effect is rather monotonous. The minuet is a severe and well-constructed fugue, with a short canonic trio of a quasi-rustic nature, which to our minds is not exactly in keeping with the somewhat archaic character of the fugue. The last movement seemed to us the weakest, both in invention and workmanship, and on the whole it may be charged with being unsymphonic. We have now to mention Mme. Clara Schumann—last, but not least—who, with all her hearers, may be congratulated on the lasting power of her artistic playing, as evidenced by the undiminished brilliancy and certainty of her *technique*, combined with a genial conception of all she interprets. Blessed by the gods, as she seems to have been, with eternal youth, she played her husband's A minor concerto, Mendelssohn's variations (Op. 82), and Chopin's Valse (Op. 42) to the delight and enthusiasm of the whole audience."

A novelty was produced at the ninth Gewandhaus-concert—namely, "Das Märchen von der schönen Melusine," for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, by Heinrich Hofmann, the composer of the "Frithjof" symphony and other works. The "Märchen" did not quite come up to our expectations, nor did it receive much encouragement on its performance here, although, with reference to its execution, everything was well prepared. Heinrich Hofmann undoubtedly possesses great skill, and thoroughly understands how to write for instruments and voices, but seems too easily satisfied. We felt that his work would have been finer and better if he had approached his task with more earnestness and deeper feeling. Many striking points bear us out in this opinion, particularly at the beginning of the prologue, which, though of choice, is yet of natural, expression, and suits the legendary character of the composition. But this does not continue long. Hofmann soon adopts the style of light romantic opera in a by no means agreeable manner. Choruses of nymphs, male choruses, arias, duets, and so on, follow each other precipitately, without forming a proper movement, and in some parts are commonplace and trivial. In the first part of the concert, Schumann's 4th (D minor) Symphony was much more enjoyable. The rendering was so charming that the conductor, Herr Capellmeister Reinecke, was twice called forward.

At the second Chamber-music Soirée this eminent artist, associated with Herr Schroeder, acquitted himself very successfully in an early, very pretty sonata for piano and violoncello (Op. 22), by Hiller. Equally successful on the same evening were Herr Concertmeister Schrädick and co-executants in Haydn's string-quartet (Op. 77, No. 2), and Beethoven's B flat quartett (Op. 130), in six movements. The third Chamber-music Soirée gained in distinction by the presence of Mme. Clara Schumann. Unfortunately we were prevented from attending it.

Credit is also due to the rendering of Brahms's *Requiem* by the "Riedel'schen Verein." It was preceded by the 42nd Psalm, for baritone, solo, chorus, and orchestra, by Schulz-Beuthen, a work belonging to that category at present styled "new German." Beyond operas, or more correctly speaking, beyond those of Wagner with which we are acquainted, we have no sympathy for this class of music, nor can we conceive how abandoning all musical traditions in sacred and concert music, and experimenting in shapeless externals, can denote any progress in art.

We have to end our notice with some mournful intelligence. Hermann Goetz, the talented and highly-gifted composer of the opera *Der Widerspänstigen Zähmung* (*Taming of the Shrew*), the F major symphony, and a whole file of important but at present little or entirely unknown works, died a few days ago. The deceased master was only thirty-five years of age. He has left behind him an unfinished opera, which is, in fact, only an outline of an opera. Goetz's creative powers must be all the higher estimated, as, for the last fifteen years, he was a great sufferer, and must have composed under great disadvantages. His works, however, will secure for him a lasting and honourable remembrance.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, December 12th, 1876.

THE first extra-concert of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde was devoted to Haydn's *Creation*. As I predicted in my last report, the performance was a glorious one. Perhaps never, as often as the work has been heard in Vienna, was the execution so wonderful. There was an ambitious and energetic conductor, Herr Herbeck, three excellent soloists, the famous tenor Herr Vogel from Munich, Frau Wilt and Herr Rokitsansky from our Hofoper, a well-trained chorus of 300 voices, and an adequate orchestra, reinforced for the first time with occasional accompaniment of the organ. No wonder that the audience filled the great concert-room of the Musikverein to the last place. It was a delight to hear the fresh choruses and the solo-singers, the clear pronunciation and manly expression, the vigorous chest voice of the tenor, the bright tones of Frau Wilt, and the well-trained bass organ of Herr Rokitsansky, who surpassed himself as he has never done before. The performance was an honour to the society, and will long be remembered by all our lovers of music.

The second concert of the Philharmonic opened with an overture by the Russian composer Tchaikowsky. It is entitled "Romeo and Juliet;" it would have been better to change it into "Montagues and Capulets," as it is less expressive of a picture of love than of the contests of the said families. Though excellently performed, its reception was not encouraging. Mendelssohn's violin-concerto was then executed by Henri Wieniawsky, whose tone and manner of execution is that of a perfect artist. He was well received and warmly applauded. The variations by Brahms, performed for the second time in Vienna, were listened to with great interest; the composer himself conducted, and received all the honours due to him. The concert ended with Schumann's symphony (No. 4). In the third Philharmonic concert we heard, after the lapse of many years, the "Naiades" overture, by Gade. M. de Swert, chamber-virtuoso to the German Emperor, performed a violoncello-concert of his own composition: he manifested himself as an excellent player, and his reception was a most honourable one. For the first time we heard the second serenade for stringed instruments by Robert Fuchs. As worthy as its predecessor, it was warmly and heartily welcomed, and the clever composer several times called for. Mendelssohn's A minor symphony, excellently performed under the conductorship of Hans Richter, closed this fine concert.

The first concert of the Sing-academie offered some new choruses by Sethus Calvisius (Weihnachtslied), Goldmark (Im Frischerthal), Rheinberger (Mummelsee), Brahms (Der Abend, Op. 64, No. 2), and the cantata "Du Hirte Israel," by S. Bach. The new compositions proved more or less an acceptable acquisition for vocal programmes. Two Lieder by Peter Cornelius, from Op. 8 (Weihnachtslieder) were performed by Frl. Rosa Girjick; two Lieder by A. Scarlatti and Pergolese, by Herr A. V. Schuttner. The first programme number of the first concert of the Männergesang-Verein was a composition for male voices with orchestral accompaniment, the words by Wolfgang Müller v. Königswinter. The composer, Herman Götz, is the same who wrote the opera *Der Widerspänstigen Zähmung*, which pleased so much wherever it was performed. The said chorus is a poetical work, rich in ideas, and truthfully descriptive of the words, "Es liegt so abendstill der See." Another number of the concert was Mozart's "Maurerische Trauermusik," a most expressive piece, of wonderful instrumental effect. It was performed in memory of the defunct Austrian poet Anastasius Grün (Count Auersperg).

The violin-virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate gave two concerts, in which he surprised the hearers by his astonishing execution of passages, trills, and every kind of difficulty. The Kreutzer-Sonata by Beethoven excepted, of which he played the variations with fine feeling, it was a pity that his programme was not better chosen. He had immense applause, and is coming again in spring. Frl. Thekla Friedländer sang some Lieder so very tastefully and expressively, and with a voice so sympathetic, that her hearers were immediately captivated. Sarasate performed only with the accompaniment of a piano, whereas Wieniawsky

permitted himself the expense of an orchestra. He performed concertos by Beethoven and Vieuxtemps, a fantasia on motives from Gounod's *Faust*, and some smaller pieces. Though he is surpassed in breadth of tone and execution by Joachim, and perhaps some others, he must be ranged in the first rank of our living violinists, and is a thorough musician. His second concert is put off, as the poor man became very ill on going to Prague. Frl. Benetti, member of the Komische Oper, sang Schubert's "Suleika" and other lieder in a very engaging manner, and with fine musical feeling.

Hellmesberger's quartet-evenings are more than ever well attended: on the first evening were performed quatuors by Mozart, G major, and Beethoven, E flat (Op. 74), and a piano-trio by Volkmann, B flat minor (piano, Herr Door). On the second evening was heard a new quatuor by Brahms; Beethoven's Sonata (Op. 69), excellently performed by Herren Egistein and Humer, and Schubert's octet. Brahms's quatuor is much less complicated than his other works; he has evidently intended to write simply. The first movement recalls even the style of Haydn, but not throughout, for often the sky is darkened by clouds. In a musical point of view the third movement is, we think, the most interesting. The quatuor was received with repeated applause, and the composer called for several times.

After the departure of Herr Nachbaur from the Komische Oper, Herr Sontheim, Kammer Sänger, from Stuttgart, began another gastspiel. For a tenor aged sixty he still commands an astonishingly powerful voice; his acting, also, is as passionate as that of a young man. He performed *Elcassar*, a rôle in which he always has been famous. The rôle of *Recha* was entrusted to Frl. Hellmer, from Brünn, who surprised the audience by her fresh voice and dramatic feeling. Of *Zampa*, *Troubadour*, and some other operas performed since, I shall speak in my next report.

In the Hofoper we have heard the famous Signora Bianca Donadio performing Dinorah and Rosine (in Rossini's *Barbier*). Though her voice is not powerful, the fair singer captivated the audience by her excellent school, intonation, brilliant execution, good taste, and a modest and engaging style of acting. As we have no tenor able to perform the rôle of Almaviva, Herr Erl, from Dresden, was invited to sing as Faust. Two years ago engaged in the Komische Oper, he was also here received with a hearty welcome. He remains the same, except that his voice has gained in strength. In January we shall hear Mlle. Nilsson; in February or March the *Walküre* is expected. Operas represented in the Hofoper from November 12th to December 12th have been:—*Aida*, *Hugenotten* (twice), *Das Goldene Kreuz* (twice), *Nordstern* (twice), *Die weisse Dame* (twice), *Tannhäuser*, *Der Liebestrank*, *Afrikanerin*, *Mignon*, *Norma*, *Tell*, *Dinorah*, *Robert der Teufel*, *Die Königin von Saba*, *Fliegende Holländer*, *Barbier von Sevilla* (twice).

MUSIC IN NORWAY.

(FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT.)

CHRISTIANIA, November, 1876.

OUR Musical Society, which, under the direction of the well-known talented conductor, J. S. Svendsen, gives concerts on a large scale, at which the most important symphonies are brought before a musically impressionable public, has announced its first concert.

Herr Svendsen commenced the season with a private concert, given with the idea of introducing a young pianist, Miss Cathinka Jacobsen (of this town) to her fellow-countrymen. Her performance of Chopin's F minor concerto was most brilliant, and evoked the warmest applause, both from the public and the critics, who were unanimous in their praise. She has acquired an admirable technique, but it was the genuineness of her musical feeling, and the dash and spirit of her performance, which pleased us most, and fairly entitles her to take rank with first-rate artists.

Herr Svendsen is lucky in the discovery of rising native (Norwegian) talent. At one of his concerts of last season he brought out Miss Johanne Rytterager (also of Christiania),

whose classical playing was so much admired that at the concert she won a perfect ovation, and was afterwards serenaded by the students. Miss Rytterager was engaged by Gade to play at the subscription concerts at Copenhagen, and had also the honour of performing at a private concert before the king and queen, who were so pleased with her that the queen took off a bracelet she was wearing and presented it to the young pianist. Both Miss Rytterager and Miss Jacobsen have been educated at the Leipzig Conservatoire, and are now starting for a concert-tour through Germany. It seems well, therefore, to direct the attention of concert-givers to these two fascinating young artists, who are not only endowed with extraordinary musical talents, but are also favoured with all the charms it is in the power of the Graces to bestow.

[We shall be glad to hear more of Herr Svendsen and his doings, particularly of his compositions.—*Ed., M. M. R.*]

Correspondence.

To the Editor of THE MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

DEAR SIR,—As one who feels himself indebted to Mr. James Higgs, Mus. Bac., Oxon, for his valuable papers on Bach's Organ Music, and for his compilation and publication of Dr. Griepenkerl's Metronomic Marks, in the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD, I earnestly hope that Messrs. Peters may be induced to collect the whole of the prefaces to Bach's works and print them as a separate volume; by so doing they will lay all organists and lovers of Bach's music under an obligation.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

Southwell, Notts, Dec. 16, 1876.

W. W. RINGROSE.
Mus. Bac., Oxon.

Reviews.

The Peters' Edition (New Series). Leipzig: C. F. Peters.
London: Augener and Co.

WHEN about this time last year we had to speak in detail of a long list of new publications by Herr C. F. Peters, we also took the opportunity of furnishing some particulars respecting the mode of dealing pursued at his great music-publishing establishment. It is sufficient therefore now to recall that it is his practice to issue the whole of the works published by him in each year in one single instalment. A complete list of those published towards the close of the past year will be found in our advertising columns. The list, which does not include a single full score, is of less extent and importance than those of some former years, work having again been interrupted, it is said, by "war's alarms." It is one, however, by no means without interest. Its most important feature certainly consists in the fact that it includes no less than twenty of Bach's cantatas, which up till now have for the most part only been obtainable in such high-priced editions as those of the Bach Gesellschaft and similar publications. Here alone, not to mention those of Bach's cantatas which have been previously made accessible, is a grand store of the sublimest choral music, which might be drawn upon with advantage by the Sacred Harmonic Society and other kindred institutions, whose directors are but too prone to excuse their apathy in searching for excellence among works, either old or new, by alleging that the production of unfamiliar works has been found to prove unremunerative. Among other works published in pianoforte score, as well as for pianoforte alone, and for four hands, attention is perhaps due to Nicolai's opera, *Lustige Weiber (The Merry Wives of Windsor)*, but which certainly seems to have met with a much more ready acceptance in Germany than it did when it was performed here some years ago at Her Majesty's Opera.

Turning to the list of pianoforte compositions, such classical works as the sonatas and other pieces of Haydn, Clementi, and Hummel, as well as Field's concerto in A flat major, speak for themselves; their having now been brought within the means of all, at an almost nominal charge, will be a welcome boon to musical students. A word or two is due to more than one of the most important of the more modern compositions

included in the list. We are first met by Gade's Scandinavian *Volkslieder* (National Songs). These, we believe, were published in England as long ago as the arrival of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales as a bride. To those who are not already acquainted with them we should say, by all means get them; though of the utmost brevity in their extent, they are replete with a peculiar charm, and have been harmonised and arranged by Herr Gade with remarkable care, and in a thoroughly refined and effective manner. Grieg's "Poetische Tonbilder" (Poetic Tone-pictures), of which some time ago we had occasion to make favourable notice in our review columns, must be familiar to many of our readers. A "Ballade," in the form of variations upon a Norwegian air, Op. 24, by this same composer, comes before us for the first time. Its entitlement, "Ballade," betokens the telling of a story, and that it rests upon a poetical basis—a fact by no means incompatible, as Liszt has so repeatedly proved, with its variation form. After his pianoforte concerto (Op. 16) it is one of the most advanced of his works that we have made acquaintance with. Abounding, almost to excess, with all the characteristic traits, especially of harmonisation, which we are accustomed to associate with Grieg, it is at once strikingly original, artistically clever, and highly dramatic; and in the hands of a practised player—for it is by no means easy to execute well—would, doubtless, prove most effective. That Grieg has by no means stood still, though it is some time since we have received a work of importance from his pen, it seems to afford a welcome proof.

Two books of Waltzes, by Theodor Kirchner (Op. 23), like those of Johannes Brahms, to whom they are dedicated, are not waltzes to dance to, but short pieces to play, of a high artistic value, and often of serious import. Like Herr Kiel (in his "Waltzes for Four Hands" and "Deutsche Reigen") and one or two other composers, Herr Kirchner seems to have emulated the example set by Brahms of compressing the largest amount of beauty of idea and artistic cleverness into the smallest possible space, instead of having aimed at adding new interest to the waltz form by development. Such trials of skill, especially when undertaken by composers so well versed in musical lore as the above-named, cannot but result in the production of much that is overwrought, and that savours too strongly of pedantry and dry scholarship, at the expense of clearness, spontaneity of idea, and natural beauty. Though we cannot but think that the *ars clare artem* has been too much overlooked in the composition of these waltzes—indeed, that the very reverse seems to have been their composer's aim—there is no denying that for the cultivated musician they richly abound with points of ideal beauty and interest, but for the practical illustration of which a sympathetic and highly-skilled interpreter will be found indispensable.

Vol. XVI. of the "Salon Album" contains six favourite pieces of moderate difficulty, by Th. Kirchner, Adolf Jensen, and Bendel. Two by Kirchner are waltzes. Jensen contributes a taking little characteristic piece, "Die Mühle" (The Mill), and a very melodious Etude (No. ix.), but which bears strong evidence of having been suggested by Dr. Hiller's well-known piece, "Zur Gitarre." Somewhat Schumannic in style, but especially pleasing, are the two by Bendel, selected from a series of pieces entitled "Am Genfer See."

Of the more important items remaining on the list we must defer speaking till our next number.

Mozart's Pianoforte Concertos. Vol. I. Pauer's Edition.
Augener & Co.

THIS recently issued first volume of a new edition of Mozart's pianoforte concertos comprises Nos. 1 to 6, composed between the years 1754—56: As the order in which they appear is somewhat different from that adopted in some other editions, it will be well to specify them by reference to Von Köchel's catalogue. They stand here as follows:—No. 1, in E flat, Op. 82, No. 4, Köchel, 482; No. 2, in G major, Op. 15, K. 453; No. 3, in D minor, Op. 54, K. 466; No. 4, in A major, Op. 22, No. 5, K. 488; No. 5, in B flat, Op. 67, K. 450; and No. 6, in C major, Op. 82, No. 6, K. 467. The speciality attaching to this new edition consists in the fact of the principal pianoforte part, with a compressed score of the orchestral accompaniments to be used on a second piano, having been arranged and revised

by Herr Pauer. The orchestration and the parts of the accompanying instruments are very fully and clearly indicated upon a separate staff. To the executant of the principal part, as well as to the student practising alone for his own delectation and improvement, the advantage of being able to see at a glance what the orchestra is about is self apparent. Though at this period it is a rarity to find pianists of the highest attainments coming forward in public with Mozart's concertos, still we suppose even the most staunch supporters of so-called "higher development" will agree in recognizing the purity of their beauty of form and expression, and, at the same time, regard them as forming an indispensable part of the education of every pianist of pretension. Whether we value them for their musical merit, as classical models, or as a means of education, these concertos of Mozart's should be in the hands of every student. Thanks are due, therefore, to Herr Pauer, as well as to the publishers, for thus making them accessible to all at a small cost, and in the convenient large octavo form, which has met with such wide approval.

The Magic Harp: Morceau de Salon. *Coralline*: Caprice. *La Maja*: Mauresque pour Piano. Par LOUIS DIEHL. London: Ashdown and Parry.

The titles, if not also the contents, of these three pieces, will doubtless prove attractive to infantile minds. The provision of "school-girl" pieces calculated to make the largest amount of display with the least possible trouble appears to have been their author's principal aim. Regarded as concessions to indolence and the ignorance of unmusical parents, they may fairly be credited with success. By a certain class of teachers they will be found useful, but cannot be looked upon as conducive to the acquisition of a taste for music of the highest kind. M. Louis Diehl appears to write with a full knowledge of the requirements of the class of teachers and pupils we have alluded to; but these specimens of his compositions, if such they are to be regarded, certainly do not say much for his inventive powers. In the *Magic Harp* there is a liberal sprinkling of small notes, arpeggios, and scale passages to be played with one finger *glissando*—the latter a device which has been sufficiently vulgarised, and we had hoped had ere this become obsolete. There is a trivial prettiness about the leading theme of *Coralline*; but it is varied in a common-place manner. It contains, too, a modulation (at the bottom of page 3), the harshness and abruptness of which will probably astonish others besides M. Diehl's pupils. *La Maja* is the most spirited and characteristic of these three pieces. Whether irregularity of rhythm is a characteristic of Moorish music we are unable to say. Certainly, in *La Maja* there seems to be a bar or two wanting here and there.

Six Gavots, for Harpsichord, Violins, and Bass. By A. CORELLI. Transcribed for pianoforte by E. PAUER. Augener & Co.

The delight which Professor Joachim has so frequently afforded popular audiences by his inimitable performance of gavots, especially those by Bach, has probably more than anything else contributed to revive an interest in those old-fashioned dance measures. But whatever the cause, there is no denying that of late years a vast number of old tunes of this class have been again brought to light, and almost as many more have been manufactured in imitation of them. The six gavots by Arcangelo Corelli, who flourished during the latter half of the seventeenth century, are interesting specimens of the music of that period, and are among the latest which Herr Pauer has made accessible to the modern pianist. In many particulars they will surprise those who make acquaintance with them for the first time. One will be struck at once with their general Handelian style, even to the recognition of passages which Handel seems to have borrowed for his organ concertos, &c. Not one of them begins with a half bar—a form of rhythm which one has been wont to regard as specially characteristic of this species of movement, though there is no lack of instances to the contrary. One will be struck with surprise at the boldness of the consecutive fifths at the top of page 3, as well as, perhaps, at the rapid pace at which Herr Pauer has directed them to be played. Taken at

his pace they will serve as excellent studies, especially in those passages where there is a succession of chords of four notes each for each hand, following each other in rapid succession. But for the consolation of those who have not attained Herr Pauer's velocity of finger, it may be said that we do not regard the pace indicated by him as imperative for their due effect, desirable though it may be. Those who admire the music of Corelli, and wish to increase their store of gavots, will be gratified with these specimens which Herr Pauer has taken the pains to transcribe.

A Christmas Fantasy for the Organ on Ancient English Carols for Christmas-tide. By W. T. BEST. London: Augener & Co.

CAROLS in church are quite a modern innovation, or, at least, quite a recent revival. Within the recollection of almost everybody among us an attempt to sing "The First Nowell," or "Good Christian Men," in service or thereafter would have been frowned down with the blackest of frowns. Now, however, carols are in high favour; and not only in churches which are "high" are they to be heard, but in churches of "low," if not of the "lowest" type. With such abounding evidence of their popularity, Mr. Best did well to attempt a new setting of some of the more characteristic of them for the organ, for there can be no doubt that a very general desire exists to bring them to a hearing during the days which follow—aye, and precede—Christmas Day.

The work before us is a very cleverly-made "Fantasy" upon the carols "God rest you, merry gentlemen," "A Virgin most pure" ("A Virgin unspotted" more properly), "The Babe of Bethlehem," "A Rare Song in praise of Christmas," "Christ was born in Bethlehem," "Ye Chimes," and "The Boar's Head Carol." These various themes the composer has treated individually, not in the variation form, but with the air once introduced, by fragmentary development. So distinctly and clearly is this done that the organist who could not afford the time to play a piece of twelve pages might easily select one or more of the carols, and work them into a voluntary with good effect. So rare are examples of artistic phrasing among organ pieces that we may well be excused for pointing out more than once the value of Mr. Best's works as studies of style. The work before us forms no exception to the rule; it is most admirably pointed for delivery, and this without being of a difficulty beyond the reach of ordinary players. In another direction, too, this piece is of value—it shows how old-scale music can be effectively and artistically treated, both in design and harmony—things very useful to know in these days of Gregorian services.

Concerts, &c.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THE ninth Saturday concert of the winter series commenced with Mr. W. T. Best's clever and well-written overture in C, composed for the Norwich Musical Festival of 1875—the only orchestral work of our great English organist that we have been made acquainted with. The symphony was Schubert's in C, No. 9—the last and greatest of his orchestral works, and one which of late has been regularly brought to a hearing here in the course of each season, with perhaps as much good reason as Beethoven's choral symphony; for with both masters the "No. 9" seems to bear the mark of a magic charm, that by Schubert bearing the same relation to his orchestral works as does that by Beethoven to his. Splendidly rendered, a hearing of it was a rare treat. The remaining orchestral work was the overture to Weber's *Der Freischütz*. By no means the least striking feature of this concert was the appearance, for the first time here, of Mrs. Beesley, who came forward as the exponent of Liszt's "Fantasie Hongroise," for pianoforte and orchestra, written for Dr. von Bülow, and with which he created a profound sensation on the occasion of his playing it some two years ago at one of the Wagner Society's concerts. Mrs. Beesley is a pupil of Dr. von Bülow's: on her first appearance in London, at a New Philharmonic concert, in 1875, she betokened the possession of so much talent and feeling by her admirable performance of Liszt's concerto in E flat, that, but for the fact that success in one concert-room does not by any means ensure an engagement in another, we should

have expected to have soon heard her again at one of our leading concerts. Though apparently slightly nervous at first, as every artist of feeling undoubtedly invariably must be, she passed the frightful ordeal of a first appearance at the Crystal Palace with striking success. Her coming forward with a work by Liszt, whose position as a composer cannot as yet be said to have been duly recognised, was a bold undertaking. Judging by the warmth of the applause which Mrs. Beesley's performance evoked, it may fairly be averred that it tended in no small degree both to advance her claims as a pianist and those of Liszt as a composer. It is, however, upon the fingers rather than upon the intellect that this fantasia of Liszt's makes the strongest demands. Admirable as it is as a sensational show-piece, we should have preferred hearing her in a concerto, say by Beethoven or Schumann, which would have been a better test of her intellectual powers. Believing, as we do, in her possession of high intelligence, we venture to hope that it will not be long before an opportunity is accorded her of displaying it. Mme. Antoinette Sterling and Mr. E. Lloyd were the vocalists; their choice of songs could not, however, on the whole be regarded as a very happy one. Mme. Sterling was heard in a recitative and air from Dr. Sullivan's *Prodigal Son*, and in a couple of songs by Raff and Schumann ("Sei still" and "Wenn ich früh"), charming in themselves, but ill adapted for so spacious a concert-room as that of the Crystal Palace. Mr. Lloyd made choice of an air, "Come, O sleep," from Mr. Cowen's *Corsair*, and a song, "The Ghazelle," by Mr. Thoulless.

The tenth concert commenced with Meyerbeer's overture to *Struensee*—a tragedy by his brother, Michael Beer. The score of this remarkable work, which has always appeared to us to be brimful of experiments in orchestration, resulting in most telling and novel effects, is on this account one of special interest to musical students. It is further remarkable for its dramatic character, the general cleverness of its construction, and the boldness displayed in certain harmonic transitions. That a work so generally pleasing and so strikingly effective should not have been more frequently brought forward seems surprising. It had not been heard here since 1868. Herr Wilhelmj, as usual, roused the audience to the highest pitch of excitement by his wondrous rendering of Bach's "Chaconne and Variations" for violin solo, and again by his playing of Ernst's "Airs Hongrois" for violin and orchestra. Dr. Sullivan's cantata, "On Shore and Sea," composed for the opening of the London International Exhibition of 1871, was now heard here for the first time. Poor in invention and dramatic feeling, it is admirably scored for both voices and orchestra. The performance, with Mme. Lemmens-Sherrington and Mr. Wadmore in the principal parts, was a capital one, but could hardly be regarded as an adequate substitute for the usual symphony; nor, if this presentation of "On Shore and Sea" stood in the place of the "new and important" work promised by Dr. Sullivan, will his admirers have escaped disappointment. For the absence of a symphony, however, some amendments were made by the magnificent performance of Beethoven's "Leonora No. 3," with which the programme closed.

The most exciting feature of the eleventh concert was the performance, for the first time in England, of Liszt's symphonic poem, "Mazeppa," No. 6 of fifteen similar works, and the first of the series which has been brought to a hearing at the Crystal Palace. Mr. Walter Bache, in company with Mrs. Beesley, having already, at his late "recital," brought this work to a hearing in an arrangement by its composer for two pianofortes, and having announced it for performance, with full orchestra, at his annual concert in February next, there are doubtless some who will regard this anticipation of it by Mr. Manns as an attempt on his part to take the wind out of Mr. Bache's sails. It is well, therefore, at once to state that nothing could be further from the truth. Mr. Manns has kindly undertaken to conduct Mr. Bache's concert, for which he has engaged the services of the Crystal Palace orchestra. The present performance was given with Mr. Bache's full concurrence, partly with a view to ensuring at his concert a perfect performance of an extraordinarily difficult work, and partly to familiarise his hearers with it beforehand, it being a work which certainly requires more than a single hearing for its due appreciation. To judge from the admirable manner of its performance, which must have involved unusual trouble, and from the enthusiasm displayed in the able analysis prepared by him for the programme-book, Mr. Manns must be fully alive to its merits. Having thus broken new ground by presenting one of Liszt's fifteen symphonic poems, one can hardly think that he will stop with No. 6, but that he must have other treats of a similar kind in store for his audience. In "Mazeppa," to quote the words of the programmist (A. M.), "Liszt has given a gigantic musical picture of the terrible three days' ride related in Victor Hugo's soul-stirring poem, and of the poet's allegorical representation of the unbridled flight of genius, and its final triumph over suffering and adversity." Extravagant as some may think it, this extra-

ordinary work was listened to, as it deserved to be, with rapt attention by a very numerous audience. Mdlle. Anna Mehlig was the pianist, coming forward, but not by her own choice, with Dr. Ferd. Hiller's concerto in F sharp minor (Op. 69), which, admirable as it must have seemed on its first appearance as a specimen of the Mendelssohnian school, already begins to sound old-fashioned by the side of the more recent concertos of Schumann, Henselt, Raff, Grieg, Tschalkowsky, etc. Full justice was done to it in performance both by Mdlle. Mehlig and the band. The symphony was that by the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, in G minor (Op. 43)—a truly charming work, and, surprising as it must appear, the only one of the eight he is said to have composed which has yet been brought to light. Schumann's strikingly original and highly dramatic overture to *Genoveva*, together with vocal pieces contributed by Mdlle. Ida Corani and Mr. F. H. Celli, completed the day's scheme.

The programme of the twelfth concert, which fell on the anniversary of Beethoven's birthday (December 16th, 1770), was devoted to a selection from the great master's works. It comprised the overture to "Prometheus," the so-called "Emperor" concerto, in E flat, No. 5 (interpreted by Mme. Arabella Goddard), the choral symphony (the principal vocal parts in which were sustained by Mme. Blanche Cole, Mme. Antoinette Sterling, Mr. E. Lloyd, and Mr. H. C. Pope), and several vocal pieces of lesser import.

The production of Euripides' *Alekestis*, with music by Mr. Henry Gadsby, in the opera theatre, on the 12th ult., was an event not to be lightly passed over. But in spite of the example set by Mendelssohn, we cannot regard the revival of the Greek dramas of two thousand years ago in company with modern music as at all desirable. We have every reason, however, to speak well of the manner in which Mr. Henry Gadsby has fulfilled his share of an ungrateful task. That he should have undertaken it simply because it was wanted, and because there was a certainty of his music being brought to a hearing, is by no means surprising when we consider the difficulty that composers have to contend with in getting their works performed; but that he should have carried it out in a thoroughly conscientious and high-minded manner, and with no ulterior aim beyond that of supplying music as nearly as possible in keeping with the archaic character of the drama, is greatly to his credit. That he has succeeded as well as the exigencies of the case permitted may fairly be averred. The pianoforte score of his music has been published by Novello and Co., and well repays perusal.

MONDAY AND SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

MDLLE. ANNA MEHLIG, who has established herself as a universal favourite, was the pianist on the last two Monday evenings before the Christmas holidays. For her solos on these two occasions she made choice of Beethoven's "Moonlight" sonata and Schumann's toccata in C (Op. 3), which latter, on being twice recalled, she supplemented with the same composer's favourite Fantasie-stück, "Traumeswirren." With Sig. Piatti she was heard in Mendelssohn's sonata in B flat (Op. 45), and in Chopin's Introduction and Polonaise Brillante (Op. 3), and with MM. Straus, Zerbini, and Piatti in Brahms's fine quartet in G minor (Op. 25). It is to be regretted that so many of the subscribers to these concerts seem to regard them merely as offering an opportunity for listening to a little music on their way to an evening party, as may be inferred from the number of late arrivals and early departures. The result has been that the more seriously disposed have been made to suffer, not only by the disturbance thus caused, but by a reduction in the number of the concerted works. Thus we have only to record the performance at these two concerts of Haydn's quartet in E flat (Op. 71, No. 3), and Schubert's quintet in C major (Op. 163). The first-named was led by Mme. Norman-Néruda, who also contributed a solo—viz., Corelli's sonata in D (Op. 5, No. 1); the second by Herr. Straus.

Mr. Franklin Taylor was the pianist at one of the Saturday afternoon concerts, choosing for his solo the late Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's sonata, "The Maid of Orleans," and taking part in Schumann's trio in D minor (Op. 63). Herr Straus introduced a novelty—viz., a sonata by Pierre Gaviniès, of which we hope to have another opportunity of speaking. The vocalists engaged on these several occasions were Mrs. Osgood, Mdlle. Redeker, and Miss Ellen Horne.

BOROUGH OF HACKNEY CHORAL ASSOCIATION.

THE performance of Schubert's *Mass in F* on a complete scale, with full band and chorus, for the first time in England, which was given by this society, under the able direction of Mr. Ebenezer Prout, at the Town Hall, Shoreditch, on the 27th of November, was an event which certainly calls for a more detailed account

that but few of the best concertos have been played, and that not a note by Schubert or Schumann has ever been heard. With such evidence before us, it cannot be said that Birmingham has kept pace with the times.

MR. B. LUARD SELBY has been appointed Organist and Choir-master to St. Barnabas Church, Marylebone.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DRUMCLOG.—A correspondent asks for information respecting a composition of Mendelssohn's, in which he introduces an old Scotch tune called "Drumclog." It is mentioned in one of Mr. William Black's novels, "A Daughter of Heth," but perhaps may be merely a creation of the author's brain. We have made inquiries, but without any definite result. Can any of our correspondents assist us?

KLESMER.—As it was explained by Dr. Hermann Adler, in the course of a lecture on "Daniel Deronda," recently delivered to the Jewish Working Men's Club, the name "Klesmer," compounded of two Hebrew words, was given to the musicians who used formerly to play at Jewish weddings. No apter surname could be adopted to denote the Hebrew extraction of the clever Bohemian or Polish musician of the style of Rubinstein.

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